

Some Notes on the Lexical Change in the Vernon
Manuscript of the *Ancrene Wisse*:
based on the Trial Version of *Electronic Parallel
Diplomatic Manuscript Texts of the Ancrene
Wisse, Preface, Parts I and II*¹

SHOKO ONO

I. Introduction

It is needless to emphasise the importance of the *Ancrene Wisse* (AW) as a source for the historical study of the English language. It has descended to us in ten different manuscripts, ranging in date from the early thirteenth to the late fourteenth centuries, although some of them are fragmental. The comparison of these manuscripts, therefore, will give us some insight into the historical development of English in the period when it went through a great change in its syntax, vocabulary and orthography. In this paper, four manuscripts will be compared by utilising the trial version of *Electronic Parallel Diplomatic Manuscript Texts of the Ancrene Wisse, Preface, Parts I and II*. In this parallel-text version of AW, the text lines from the four manuscripts are arranged in parallel order so as to facilitate the comparative study of the manuscripts. This historical corpus has been prepared by the Tokyo Manuscript Reading Group, of which I am a member, as a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research project. Its trial printed version was published in 1997. The project is still in progress; we expect the revised final version to be published in the near future.

This paper, therefore, is intended to be a pilot study to explore how we can benefit from this data base as well as to demonstrate that this type of electronic corpus can be an enormously helpful tool for the diachronical research of the English language. The four manuscripts

chosen for this data base are indicated below, with the approximate dates and dialects cited from Laing, *Catalogue* (1993)² and Pearsall, *Studies* (1990):³

MS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 402 (abbreviated as A):

C13a2, Language of Wigmore, NW Herefords.

MS London, British Library, Cotton Cleopatra C.vi (abbreviated as C):

C13a2, On language of the A scribe, see Dobson *AR* (1973), pp. lxxii-xciii (p. lxxxv, Anglian dialect of West-Midlands)

MS London, British Library, Cotton Nero A. xiv (abbreviated as N):

C13a2, Language of S Worcs, not far from the Gloucs.

MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Eng. poet. a. 1 (Vernon MS, abbreviated as V):

1380-1400, North Worcestershire (possibly West Warwickshire)

II. Illustration of *Electronic Parallel Diplomatic Manuscript Texts of the Ancrene Wisse*

(1) Sample Extract from the Parallel Text

Following is the extract of the parallel text cited from AW Part I: *Protecting the Heart through the Senses* [A (Corpus) f. 13r1-5, C (Cleopatra) f.20v3-9, N (Nero) f. 11v9-14, V (Vernon) f. 373vb71-77].⁴

«A f.13r»

01

A of his grace.	þe	hwite cros	l4impeð	to ow.	For þreo	crosses
C of his grace.	9þe	hwite cros	limpeð	/to ow.	for þreo	crosses
N of his grace.	þet	/hwite creoz	limpeð	to ou.	uor þreo manere	creoices
V of his grace.	P/þe	white	falleþ	to ow.	ffor þreo	crosses

02

A beoð.	read.	&	blac.	&	hw4it.	þe	reade	limpeð	to þeo	þe	beoð	for
C beoð.	read	&	blac	&/	wit.	9þe	reade	limpeð	to þeo	þ	beoð	for
N beoð.	/reade.	&	blake.	&	hwite.	þ	reade	limpeð	to þeo	3	þ	beoð
V beþ.	Red.	and	/Blac.	and.	whit.	Pþe	Rede.	falleþ	to pulke.	þat	beoþ	/for

03

A godes	luue wið	hare	blod	schedunge	irudet	&	ireadet	as
C go/des	luue wið	hare a3en	blod		irudet	&	irea/ded	as % were
N go-/des	luue mid	hore	blod%	schedunge	iruded	&	ireaded	3 ase
V godes	loue.w7i7þ	heore	blod	schedynge.	I.redet.	and	/redet.	as

04

A þe	martirs	weren.	þe	blake cros	limpeð	to þeo	þe	maki/eð
C þe	martirs.		9þe	blake cros	limp/peð	to þeo	þe	makeð
N þe	/martirs	weren.	þ	blake croiz	limpeð	to þeo	þ	makieð
V þe	Martires	weren.	Pþe	Blake cros	falleþ	to pulke.	þat	makeþ

A i þe worlt hare penitence for ladliche sunnen. þe hwhite
 C i%þe world hare peni/tence for ladliche sunnen. þe hwhite
 N i%ðe /worlde hore penitence uor lodliche sunnen. þ̅ hwhite croiz
 V I þe world. penau7nces for heore/ Synnes. P þe white

Mod E translation, cited from White (1991)⁵:

... of his grace. The white cross pertains to you; for there are three crosses, red and black and white. The red pertains to those who for God's sake are made ruddy and red with the shedding of their blood, as the martyrs were. The black cross pertains to those who do penance in the world for hateful sins. The white cross. . . .

symbols used:

- /: A diagonal line indicates the end of each line in the manuscript.
- %: Distinct lexical items that are written consecutively without word-division in the manuscript are separated by a percentage mark in our text.
- : Hyphen written by the original scribe at the end of a line.
- P (with a space on both sides): paraph mark in the manuscript.
- 3: punctus elevatus(:) in the manuscript, for example, "ireaded 3 ase".
- 4: An acute accent written above a letter (often "i") is indicated by a preceding "4".
- 7: Abbreviated letter(s), often indicated by a bar written above a letter in the manuscript, is (are) expanded with a preceding "7" in our text as in "hi7m" and "d7o7m7ini".
- 9: Distinctly larger form of normal lower-case letter.

As is illustrated above, the lines from the four manuscripts are arranged as parallel text with the Corpus (A) line at the top, followed by the corresponding lines from Cleopatra (C), Nero (N) and Vernon (V). Each set of parallel lines is preceded by the line number in the Corpus manuscript folio. The folio number of the Corpus manuscript is indicated in the double angular brackets, as in «A f.13r». The text

lines are intended to represent, on a diplomatic basis, the text written by the original scribe of each manuscript, fundamentally based on the readings of Tolkien, Dobson and Day, respectively. Their readings have been altered only when we are convinced we are right through a comparison with a microfilm of the manuscripts. All dubious cases are discussed in the notes. The Vernon version especially is treated more diplomatically since its printed transcript is not currently available. The manuscript texts from the microfilm, corresponding to the extract cited above, are shown below for purposes of illustration:

A (Corpus)

215 × 148 mm

parchment

of his grace þe hytte awl lumpyd to op þar þu wolle
beod. read. 7 blac. 7 hytt þe reade lumpyd to þu þe beoð for
godes lufe mid þare blod schedunge itudet 7 meader. at
þe murtur þere. þe blake awl lumpyd to þe þe maked
ed i þe port þare penitence for ladliche sinne. þe hytte

C (Cleopatra)

194 × 140 mm

vellum

gleamer of his grace. þe hytte awl lumpyd
to op. for þu wolle beod. read. 7 blac
hytt. þe reade lumpyd to þe þe beoð for go
des lufe mid þare blod itudet 7 me
ader at þare murtur. þe blake awl lumpyd
to þe þe maked i þe port þare peni
tence for ladliche sinne. þe hytte lumpy

N (Nero)

144 × 107 mm

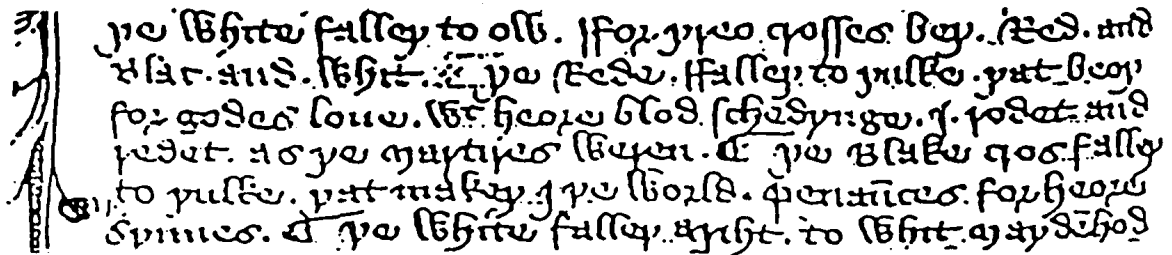
parchment

beod. unleafuldie unaked ou þe gleamer of his grace. þe
hytte awl lumpyd to ou. uor þu wolle beod.
reade. 7 blake 7 hytte. þe reade lumpyd to þe þe beoð uor go
des lufe mid þare blod schedunge itudet 7 meader. at þe
murtur þere. þe blake awl lumpyd to þe þe maked i þe
port þare penitence uor ladliche sinne. þe hytte awl lumpy

V (Vernon)

21.5 × 15.5 inches

vellum



þe White fallay to oð. þfor ȝeo goððeo beȝ. (æd. and
blac. and. Whit. & ȝe (æd. fallay to ȝulle. ȝat beȝ
for goðeo loue. (æd. ȝeo beȝ. (æd. ȝeȝ. ȝ. ȝoðeo and
ȝeȝ. aȝ ȝe ȝuȝeo beȝ. & ȝe blac goð fallay
to ȝulle. ȝat maȝ ȝe beȝ. ȝeȝeo. for ȝeo
ȝuȝeo. & ȝe White fallay. aȝ. to Whit. aȝ. d. ȝeo

(2) Some Conspicuous Differences Observed among the Four Manuscripts in the Extract Above

In the first set of lines (A f. 13r01), several orthographical differences can be observed. Only Vernon, the fourteenth century manuscript, employs the “wh-” spelling in *white*, while the other three manuscripts preserve “hw-” (*hwite*). On the other hand, Nero uses the spellings *creoiz* and *creoices*, which reflect the OF form *crois/croiz*. These OF-type spellings, although they were to become obsolete in the fifteenth century, are characteristic of the southern dialect of early ME (no example recorded in MED). Moreover, the southern spelling *vor*, with a voiced “v” instead of “f”, is used in Nero. As for the Vernon form *ffor*, it can be assumed that the double “f” is equivalent to the capital letter “F”.

In terms of vocabulary, the thirteenth century manuscripts still employ *limpeð*, which is supposed to have become obsolete after 1230 according to MED, while it is replaced by *falleþ* in Vernon. The Vernon scribe adopted *fallen* with the meaning of ‘belong to’, which is attested to only in ME (the first citation in MED is in 1290, although this meaning did not survive into the fifteenth century, according to OED).

The frequent addition of words, moreover, is one of the innovative features of the Nero scribe; this feature distinguishes the Nero manuscript from the other three. This can be noticed in the appositive use of *manere*, found only in Nero.

In the second set of lines (A f. 13r02), we can observe the use of

punctuation marks and the capitalization peculiar to the Vernon scribe. This scribe employs capitalization to give prominence to the important words (for example *Blac* and *Red* in the extract) and the paraph mark (P) at the point of topical change.

In the third set of lines (A f. 13r03), we can see another new spelling convention found only in Vernon: *loue* instead of the *luue* of the other three. A word must be said here about the use of the percentage mark and the word-division. The priority of our corpus is to be diplomatic. At the same time, however, we have tried to indicate what we recognize as a word by utilising the percentage mark, as has been explained in the previous section. Therefore, the percentage mark in the Cleopatra line signifies that *as* and *were* should be treated as two separate words, although they are written together without an intervening space in the manuscript. This device enables us at once to make our text diplomatic and to produce wordlists, word indexes and concordances of what we regard as “words,” based on this corpus. In the case of “blod % schedunge” in Nero, however, the problem is not so simple as is the previous example. It is possible to argue that these two words should be left as they are recorded in the manuscript, that is, as one compound word, because they can be thought of as one meaning unit. In this case, we have followed MED, in which such other collocations as *blod spilling*, *blod shedere*, and *blod sweting* are cited under blod 1b(a), together with *blod shedding*, treated as two separate words. Our fundamental principle, however, is to preserve the word-division in the manuscripts as much as possible unless it would be very absurd to do so. A further difficulty arises when we examine the two words at the beginning of the fifth set of lines (A f. 13r05) in the corresponding parts of the manuscripts. As can be seen in the photo copies of the microfilm on the pages 4 and 5, it seems hardly possible to decide on whether or not there is a space between the two words in Corpus (A) and Vernon (V).

From the lexical point of view, the frequent (but not completely consistent) use of the archaic *mid* in place of *wiþ*, as found in the Nero line corresponding to A f. 13r03, is characteristic of the Nero scribe.

Another point to be remarked is the transcription of the word *irudet* in the Cleopatra line corresponding to the same Corpus line. As far as we can see from the photo copy of the microfilm text, the word looks like *iruded* rather than Dobson's transcription *irudet*, although further examination against the original manuscript will be necessary before revising Dobson's reading. A morphological difference is noticeable in the Vernon *redet*, the past participle without the prefix "i-".

In the fifth set of lines (A f. 13r05), *penitence* in the thirteenth century manuscripts is replaced by *penaunces* in Vernon. Both words originate in OF. Of the two, *penitence* is an earlier borrowing (the first citation in MED, a1200); on the other hand, *penaunce*, put in the English plural form in this line, entered ME later through AF (the first citation in MED, 1280). The strong plural form in the Vernon *synnes* also differs from the weak plural *sunnen* in A, C and N. Besides, the Vernon scribe's use of "y" for the vowel in *synnes* represents the unrounded /ɪ/ sound in the northern and the east Midland dialects. On the other hand, the rounded /y/ sound in the south-west dialect is spelled as "u" in *sunnen* in the other manuscripts.

II. Lexical Change in Vernon

As has been illustrated in the previous section, Vernon, composed in the fourteenth century, is often different in the use of lexical items from the other three manuscripts. The Vernon scribe employs different native words, or French loan words, or, less often, words of Old Norse origin, instead of the corresponding native words in the other three. A closer examination of the lexical differences between Vernon and the other three manuscripts will give us more details as to how the older native words or meanings were replaced by other native or loan words.

(1) Native Words (Often Obsolete) in A, C, and N Replaced by Other Native Words in Vernon

limpeð→falleþ

As has been pointed out in the previous section, Vernon employs

falleþ in the meaning of 'to belong to, pertain, be appropriate (cf. MED *fallen* VII 36-9.)' instead of the obsolete *limpeð to*. In our parallel text, there is no instance of *limpen* in Vernon. Seven examples of the replacement of *limpeð to* in A are indicated below (the meaning of the word in each context is cited within the carets):

limpeð to A f. 03r14→V f. 372ra58 *touchen* to 'applies to'
 A f. 03r16→V f. 372ra60 to . . . *falleþ* 'is divided into'
 A f. 03r25→V f. 372ra69 *falleþ* to 'applies to'
 A f. 13r01 →V f. 373vb72 *falleþ* to 'belongs to'
 (cited in the previous section)
 A f. 13r02→V f. 373vb73 *falleþ* to 'belongs to'
 A f. 13r04→V f. 373vb75 *falleþ* to 'belongs to'
 A f. 18r02→V f. 374vb72 *falleþ* to 'is proper to'
 A f. 23r10→V f. 375vb38 *falleþ* to 'belongs to'

In most cases, Vernon employs *falleþ to* with the meaning of 'belong to' in place of the *limpeð to* in the other three manuscripts, although, as far as our present corpus is concerned, no use of *fallen to* in this meaning is attested to in A. In A 03r14, however, a French loan word *touchen* is used as substitute with the meaning 'to pertain to, apply to (cf. MED *touchen* 8.)'. *Touchen* is a fourteenth century French loan word, the first citation of this use in MED being either in a1325 (?c1300) *NPass.* or in a1325 (c1280) *SLeg. Pass.*

These observations naturally lead us to a supposition which may explain the gap between the disappearance of *limpen* (the last citation in MED3. (a) is in 1230 *Ancre.* (Corpus)) and the later appearance of *belong to* (the first citation in MED is in c1390 *Gower CA Supple.*). In the fourteenth century south-west dialect, *limpen* must have been almost out of use, supplanted first by the native word *fallen* and then by the French *touchen*, before the newly coined *bilongen to* (the intensive form of *longen*) spread, probably from the eastern dialect. It should be remarked here that both *touchen* and *fallen* are words which cover a wide range of meaning; especially, *fallen* is classified into 47 meaning categories in MED. On the other hand, *bilongen* is more specific in meaning.

bearn→child

Two instances of this replacement confirm that *bearn* was almost obsolete in the late fourteenth century. In the early ME, *bearn* seems still to have been in use, especially when it refers to Christ or the Devil.⁶ Otherwise, the common expression seems to have been the *child* of A, C, N. In both A f. 09v12 (V f. 373rb41) and A f. 21r19 (V f. 375va13), where *bearn* refers to Christ and ‘monster or devil’ respectively, Vernon uses *child* instead of *bearn*.

þurl→hole, window

Out of twelve examples of *þurl* in A, Vernon replaces it with *hole* in six instances and *window* once in A f. 17r27 (V f. 374vb46). In the remaining five cases, Vernon preserves *þurl*. The use of *hole* in the meaning of ‘window’ is first recorded in 1330, according to MED. In Vernon, both *þurl* and the more recent *hole* are commonly used, while in A *þurl* is the common expression. *Window* is an Old Norse loan word in ME; its first citation in OED is from AW (1225). However, it does not seem to be a common word in either A or V, appearing twice in the whole A manuscript and once in Vernon of the present trial version. (The context in which *hole* or *þurle* or *window* appears is indicated within the carets in Modern English.)

- þurl A f. 12v23→V f. 373vb65 holen ‘love your windows’
- C f. 25v20→V f. 374va07þurles ‘the house’s windows’
- C f. 26r02→V f. 374va16 þurl ‘each window’
- A f. 15v19→V f. 374va46 hole ‘the parlor’s window’
- A f. 17r19→V f. 374vb37 hole ‘the church’s window’
- A f. 17r22→V f. 374vb40 hole ‘the house’s window’
- A f. 17r23→V f. 374vb41 holes ‘two windows’
- A f. 17r27→V f. 374vb46 wyndou ‘open her window’
- A f. 21v28→V f. 375va53 hole ‘to cover the privy hole’
- A f. 25r12→V f. 376ra69 þurl ‘window cloth’
- A f. 25r15→V f. 376ra72 þurl ‘turn your window’
- A f. 31v09→V f. 377ra60 þurles ‘within your window’

Through observing the coexistence of these three words with the meaning ‘window’ in Vernon, we can assume that, between the decre-

asing use of *purl* and the spread of *window*, there was a period in ME when the native word *hole* was used in its new extended meaning of ‘window’. It is noticeable that here, too, *hole* is highly polysemic just as is the *fallen* explained above; moreover, it has quite a few homonyms, for example, adj. *hol(e)* ‘healthy’.

forculet→forblaked (A f. 12v27, V f. 373vb70)

Following is the extract of A f. 12v27 from the parallel text:

A	te soðe sunne	haueð utewið	forculet ow.
C	þe soðe sunne	haueð vtewið	forculed ou.
N	te soðe sunne þ is / iesu crist	haueð wiðuten	uorkuled ow.
V	þe soþe / So7ne	hap so	<u>forblaked</u> ow.

As the two citations of *forcul(i)en* in MED are from the Corpus version of AW, this word is likely to have been obsolete in the fourteenth century. It means ‘to darken or blacken (something) by scorching’ and has its origin in the OE *culu* ‘spotted’. Vernon replaces this with the verb *blaken* ‘to make black’ combined with the intensifying prefix “for-”. The first citation of *blaken* in MED is in a1333, but *forblaken* is not recorded in MED as a separate entry.

Other examples of this type of replacement are listed below:

were ‘husband’→V fere	half ‘side’→V syde
sore ‘intensely’→V sori	forbearnd→V ibrent
earest, earre→V furst	foð to→V biginnen to
licomlich→V bodiliche	scir→V brizt

(2) Native Words Replaced by the “--inge” Form of Verbs in Vernon

In Vernon, the “--inge” form of the verb is often employed instead of the “--unge”-form nouns or other nouns in the other manuscripts.

sihðe→seoinge

«A f.12v05»

«V f. 373vb46»

A þe fif wittes. Sihðe. & herunge.

C þe fif wittes. sichte. & herunge.

N ðe vif wittes. sihðe. & herunge.

V þe ffyfue wittes. Seoinge. & 9herynge.

Obviously, *seoinge* ‘act of seeing’ is a more modern usage, as its first citation in MED is in 1382. Moreover, the Vernon scribe might have intended to make the passage more coherent by using four consecutive “--inge” forms in lines V f. 373vb46-7: *Seoinge, Herynge, Smullinge and þenkyng*, because *siht* is frequently used in other places in Vernon. It should be noted here, too, that the supplanted native word *sihðe* is highly polysemic.

bode or heste→biddinge

«A f. 01v28»	«A f. 12v08»	«A f. 28v05»
«V f. 371vb69»	«V f. 373vb49»	«V f. 376vb21»
A ah is of godes/heaste.	he/deð Salomones bode.	ear þen þ/biddunge areare
C Ach is of go/des heste.	he deð salomones heste.	ear þenne þe biddunge areare
N auh is of godes hestes.	he deð salomones heste.	þen þet biddunge/arere
V 9ac is of godes heste.	he/deþ Salomons biddynge	þen þat biddynge. arere

Biddynge is also a more modern usage, its first appearance recorded in MED being in 1375. In Vernon, *biddynge* is used in A f. 12v08 (V f. 373vb49) for Salomon’s command and in A f. 28v05 (V f. 376vb21) for an anchoress’s request, while the older *heste* is preserved in the context concerning God in A f. 01v28 (V f. 371vb 69).

Other examples are listed below:

eieðurl→V lokynge	spellunge→V spekyng
fundles→V fondynge	changunge→V chaungynge
locunge→V lokynge	earste dale, frumðe→V biginninge
liggunge→V ligginge	polemodnesse→V soffrynge (OF origin)
fundles→V doynge	riwle→V makynge

The frequent use of the gerundive “--inge” form is one of the unmistakably modern features of the Vernon manuscript.

(3) Native Words Replaced by French Loan Words in Vernon

Many of the supplanted native words are assumed to have been obsolete in the late fourteenth century, just as they are in the cases of

replacement by the native words explained above. Some typical examples are listed and explained below:

wlite→V *visage*

In A f. 14v09, as is illustrated below, *wlite* is replaced by a French loan word *visage* in Vernon, although *wlite* here can be interpreted as either ‘face’ or ‘beauty’. Judging from the last quotation of *wlite* in c1250 in OED, *wlite* must have been obsolete in the fourteenth century. On the other hand, *visage* seems to have been a new borrowing in this period, because the first quotation of *visage* in OED is in 1303. However, the replacement occurs only once in our present corpus. In the later passage, *wlite* is replaced by words meaning ‘fairness’ or has no corresponding words in Vernon. The meaning of *wlite* might have already lost its close association with ‘face’ in this period.

«A f. 14v09»	«A f. 26r02»	«A f. 26r03»
«V f. 374rb04»	«V f. 376rb37»	
A hire <i>wlite</i> him like	to seo mi <i>wlite</i>	& ti <i>wlite</i> /schene
C hire <i>wlite</i> him likeð	to seo mi <i>wlite</i>	& þi <i>wlite</i> sche/ne
N hire <i>hwite</i> like him	uorto iseon mi <i>hwite</i>	& ti <i>hwite</i> schene
V heore <i>visage</i> him lyke	to se/my brihtnesse	(no corresponding words)
«A f. 26r06»	«A f. 26r08»	
«V f. 376rb41»	«V f. 376rb43»	
A swete speche ant/schene <i>wlite</i>	schaw þu na mon þi <i>wlite</i>	
C swete speche & schene <i>wlite</i>	scheaw þu na mon þi <i>wlite</i>	
N swete speche. & schene <i>hwite</i>	scheau ðu no/ne monne þi <i>hwite</i>	
V Swete speche. & and feir of heow	scheu3 þu no mon þi feirschi-/pe	

As for the words with the meaning of ‘face’, *ansene*, another native word for ‘face’, does not appear in any of the thirteenth century manuscripts. Besides, another French loan word ‘face’ is not used in Vernon, although its first quotation in MED is in c1290. Further evidence is needed to explain the lexical change from the native *wlite* to *face* or *visage* in the fourteenth century.

nurð→noise

nurð . . . makeð→goþ criꝛnde

Another example is the replacement of *nurð* 'noise', which was evidently obsolete in the fourteenth century, because the last citation in MED is from A. The examples are quoted from Part III as well as from the Preface, Parts I and II for the purpose of illustration.

«A f. 16r25»	«A f. 23v24»	«A f. 23v25»
«V f. 374vb02»	«V f. 375vb79»	«V f. 375vb80»
A mare nurðe/he makeð	euch nurð eorðlich	Nurðe/ne kimeð in heorte
C (no corresponding line)	uch eorðlich nurð	Nurðe hire ne kimeð in heorte
N more noise he makeð	euerich worldlich <u>murhðe</u>	<u>noise</u> ne cumeð ine/heorte
V goþ <u>criꝛnde</u>	vche <u>murþe</u> eorþlich	<u>Murþe</u> /ne comeþ in herte

Part III	«A f. 36r17»	«A f. 44r3»
	«V f. 378ra03»	«V f. 379rb59»
A	nurð	nurð
C	nurð	nurð
N	<u>noise</u>	<u>muruhðe</u> . ne <u>noise</u>
V	<u>murþe</u>	<u>noyse</u>

The definitions and the relevant dates of citations in MED are as follows:

MED nurth noise; the citations are quoted only from AW (1230) and the Katherine Group (1225).

noise (OF) 1. (a) A sound; esp., a loud or unpleasant sound; the first citation is in a 1250 (Nero).

crien (OF) 1 (a) To cry out, shout; the first citation is in c1300.

mirth 5 (a) an entertainment or amusement; song, singing, musical performances; used from OE throughout the ME period.

Instead of *nurð* in A, Vernon and Nero use the native *murþe* or the French loan word *noyse*. Vernon, moreover, employs another French loan word *criꝛnde*. It seems from the context that the Vernon scribe uses *criꝛnde* and *noyse* when referring to an actual sound. Diensberg comments on the replacement by *murþe* that “A *nurð* ‘noise’ (A f. 16a25, f. 23b24, 25, f. 37[6]a2[1]7)⁷ is incorrectly rendered by V *murþe* ‘mirth’ (V f. 374d, f. 375d, f. 378a)” and, utilising

these examples as evidence, opines further that “Vernon is supposed to be closely related to Nero, as both manuscripts are shown to have a common ancestor. . . . Our work on the [Vernon] edition [of EETS] . . . allows the conclusion that the Vernon scribe must have used an exemplar of the Corpus-type. . . .”⁸ Although Diensberg denies Vernon’s close connection with Nero and claims that Vernon was copied from a Corpus-type exemplar, our citations from the parallel text do not confirm his hypothesis. Because the Nero scribe also employs *murþe* as well as *noise*, the use of *murþe* in the passages cited by Diensberg cannot be sufficient evidence to refute the connection between N and V.

It is worth noting that the meaning categories of *noise*, which survives into ModE, are not so varied as *murþe*, which covers a wide range of meaning in Middle English.

Other examples of replacement by French loan words are illustrated below:

sot→V fool

«A f. 16r06»	«A f. 17v12»
«V f. 374va61»	«V f. 374vb57»
A ha is sot	Muche fol were þe maht . . .
C ha is a sot	Muche fol he were þe machte
N heo is sot	Muche fol he were þe muhte
V heo is a fool	Muche fol weore he. þat mouzte

MED sot n. (1) (a) a fool; c1175---a1550.

fol n. 1. a. a foolish stupid person; c1200---c1475 (frequent after 1400).

Both *sot* and *fol* are used in A, C, N, while *fol* is invariably used in Vernon. *Sot* might have been obsolete to the Vernon scribe, although *sotiliche* is preserved in Vf. 377ra41.

sunderliche, moni cunne→V diuers

«A f. 04r21»	«A f. 01r13»
«V f. 372rb41»	«V f. 371vb20»
A of sunderliche þinges	Mon4ie cunne riwlen
C of sunderliche þinges	mo/ni cunne riwlen

N of sunderliche þingges Moni cunne riwle
 V of diuerse þingges Moni diuerse Rulen

MED sonderli adj (a) separate, different; only two examples are cited after 1230 (AW).

divers(e) adj. 1. (a) differing in kind or character, divergent.

In Vernon, although *sundri*, *sunderlepes*, and *kunne* are found, sporadically *sonder* seems to have already been obsolete in the fourteenth century, for the two examples of *sonder* with the meaning of 'various' are replaced by *diverse*.

Other examples of the replacement of obsolete native words by French loan words are listed below, with indications of the dates of the first and last citations in MED:

bifon (A, C, N)→V receyuen (A f. 19v17)

MED bifon (a) to take possession of; c1150---a1450 (only one example after 1225)

receiven 1 (a) to take into possession; c1330---a1500.

bizet (A, N)→V profyt (hap) (A f. 16r19)

MED biyeten 2 (b) to obtain a privilege or concession; c117---a1325.

profit 1a (a) benefit, advantage; (c1384)---a1500.

chafleð (A, C, N)→V gangleþ (A f. 17v15)

MED chavelen to indulge in idle talk; two instances in c1230 (AW) and one in a1325.

janglen 1. (a) to chatter, talk idly; c1300---a1500.

ferde (A, C, N)→V host (A f. 18v12)

MED ferd(e) n (2) 1. (b) an invading army; a1160---a1425 (rare in the fourteenth century).

host(e) n (1) 1 (a) an army; c1300---a1500.

maðelunge→V iangle (A f. 19r23, A f. 20r28)

MED mathelinge idle talk, chatter; only two examples in c1230 (AW).

jangle (a) an idle word, idle speech; c1390--)-c1450.

mehe (A, C), N mowe→V nece (A f. 19v19)

MED meghe a female relative; 1200---c1230 (AW). --1230 (AW).

mowe n (1) a female relative; a1211---(1440)

nece (a) a niece; c1325---a1500.

ondfule (A, C, N)→V envyouse (A f. 17r15)

MED ondful(e) as n. (b) envious person(s); c1230 (AW)---a1250.

envious adj. 2. envious; . . . also as noun; (1340)---c1475.

swiinge wike(A), swizen wike(C), swiþwike (N)→V passion wike (A f. 17v07)

MED swiinge the act of keeping silent; only two examples in a1225 are recorded.

swizen v.to be silent; a1150---c1230(AW).

swi(e) weke Holy Week; a1225---c1300.

passion wike the week before Palm Sunday; a1225---a1500.

In many cases of replacement by French loan words, however, the native words are not necessarily obsolete. In some cases, the native words and the corresponding French words seem to be almost interchangeable, as can be seen in the pair, *forbisne* and *ensaumple*, indicated below.

«A f. 13r26»

«V f. 374ra19-20»

A ha to þe 3ongre 3eoueð uuel forbisne.

C heo to/þe 3eunge 3eueð for_bisne.

N heo to þe 3unge/ 3iueð vuel vorbisne.

V heo to/þe 3onge. 3iueþ euel ensaumple.

The quotations of *for(e)-bisne* with the meaning of ‘an example of conduct’ in MED range from a1225 to c1400; on the other hand, the first citation of *ensaumple* (4b. an action, bad or good, which may be imitated (in *yeven ensample*)) is in 1290. The Vernon scribe here replaces the old native word with the AF loan word. In other places, however, the usage of these two words is not so consistent, as the following citations indicate.

«A f. 17r17»

«A f. 19v06»

«A f. 30v23»

«V f. 374vb35»

«V f. 375ra75»

«V f. 377ra17»

A þe oþre forbisne

beo forbisne

an essample

C þe oðere forbisne

beon forbisne

an ensample

N þe oþre uorbisne

beon uobisne

on asaumple

V þe oþur forbysene

beo forbysne

on ensaumple

All four versions employ both *forbisne* and *ensaumple*, although in the last example the meaning of *ensaumple* is close to something like ‘an illustration’. These examples illustrate the interchangeability and coexistence of the native word, which was soon to disappear, and the new French word, which was destined to spread widely in English.

Among the coexistent pairs of native words and corresponding French loan words, such as *emsaumple* and *forbisne*, it is discernible that the native words often cover a wide range of meaning or have several homonymous words, while the French loan words are more specific in meaning. Some examples are as follows:

demde/dampned (OF)

«A f. 04r08»	«A f. 14r09»
«V f. 372rb30»	«V f. 374ra57»
A dem wac eauer þe seoluen	demde al hire ofsprung
C deme as þe seolf	demde al hire ofsprung
N demðe suluen euer woc	tauhte al hire ofsprung
V deme feble euere þi siluen	Dampned al hire ofspryng

In A f. 14.09, the new French loan word *dampnen* (first cited in MED in 1340) is used in Vernon instead of the native word *demen*, with the meaning of ‘to condemn’. On the other hand, in A f. 4r08, where *demen* means ‘to judge’, Vernon preserves *demen*. It should be noted here that the word *demen* in Middle English covers a wide range of meaning, from ‘to judge’ to ‘to perceive’. (Actually, it comprises fifteen meaning categories in MED.) The French loan word is preferred where the scribe can specify and thus clarify the meaning by its use.

ifondet/itempted (OF)

«C f. 25r07»	«A 24v01»
«V f. 374rb61»	«V f. 376ra32»
A no line	þe habbeð hit ifondet
C of hire ifondet	þ̅ habbeð hit ifonded
N of hire i _tempted	ðet habbeð hit i _uoned
V of hire Itemptet	þat habbeþ hit I.fondet

Although in C f. 25r07 the Corpus has no corresponding line, Vernon and Nero use the French-origin *tempten* (first cited in MED in c1230 (AW)) instead of the native *ifondet* (p. p. of *fonden*) used in Cleopatra. In A 24v01, on the other hand, where *ifondet* means ‘to try to find out by experiment,’ Vernon retains *ifondet*. As for the word

fonden, it cannot be ignored that this word also covers a relatively wide range of meaning and that, moreover, the form “fonden” can be a variant spelling of the homonymous verbs *founden* ‘to proceed’ or *founden* ‘to lay a foundation’. The use of the more specific and less confusing word *tempten* characterizes the Vernon manuscript.

bonen/preyeres

«A f. 01r14»	«A f. 07v12»	«A f. 09r02»	«A 19r20»
«V f. 371vb21»	«V f. 372vb75»	«V f. 373ra65»	«V f. 375ra63»
A þurh ower bone	þuruh hare bonen	makie a pulli bone	bit him eani bone
C þurch ower bone	þorh hare bone	maken eauer pulli bone	bideð him ani bone
N þuruh ower bone	þuruh hore bonen	makieð a swuch bone	bit him eni bone
V þorw oure bone	þorw heore bone	make suche preyeres	bit him eny boone

Bone(n) means ‘prayer to God’ except in A f. 1r14, where its meaning is close to ‘request (not to God)’. *Preier* is first cited in MED in c1300. From the examples above, *preyeres* and *bone* in Vernon seem to constitute a coexistent and interchangeable pair, although *bone* in this meaning did not survive into Modern English. Likewise, according to MED, *bon* n. (2) ‘prayer’ has a homonym *bon* n. (1) ‘bone of human or animal’.

Lastly, two examples will be added to exemplify the tendency for the use of more specific lexical items in place of extant native words:

inedd/reboundeþ

«A f. 18r26»
«V f. 375ra13»
A þenne is hit inedd aþein
C þenne is hit ined aþein
N þeonne is hit ined aþein
V þenne reboundeþ hit aþeyn

A f. 18r26 exemplifies the point mentioned above. The native word *inedde* is the past participle of *neden* ‘to force back’, which is homonymous with the verb *neden* ‘to need’ and the noun *ned(e)* ‘necessity’ and another noun *ned(e)* ‘a plate on which the point of a nail

is beaten'. On the other hand, Vernon supplants it with the late fourteenth century French borrowing *rebounden* 'to be driven back forcibly' (the first citation in MED is in a1398). The inclination towards a more specific and less ambiguous use of words is thus discernible in Vernon as has been illustrated above.

feieð/coupleþ (OF)

«A f. 20r13»

«V f. 375rb29»

A for þi feieð ysaie hope & silence

C for þi seið/ysaye hope & silence

N vor þi ueieð/isaie hope & silence

V ffor þi coupleþ seiþ Ysaye 3⁹ ho/pe & silence

«A f. 20r21»

«V f. 375rb37»

A hwi ysaie ueieð hope & silence & cupleð ba togederes.

C hwi ysaie feizeð/hope & silence to_gedere.

N hwi isaie ueieð/hope & silence. & kupleð boðe to_gederes.

V whi Ysaie vieþ hope 7&¹⁰/silence. and coupleþ bope to_gederes.

These two words can be assumed to be coexistent during the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries, but these examples suggest that *couplen* is supplanting *feieð*, which also has two homonyms cited in MED, *feien* v. (2) 'to clear out' and *feien* v. (3) 'to put someone on bad terms with God'.

III. Conclusion

It is widely accepted that Middle English went through a great change in its vocabulary in the fourteenth century partly because of the influx of French borrowings. As a result, the English language acquired an enormous amount of new vocabulary. This paper has explored the lexical change which took place in the late fourteenth century, as observed in the Vernon manuscript, by utilising *Electronic Parallel Diplomatic Manuscript Texts of the Ancrene Wisse, Preface, Parts I and II* (A trial version). The line-by-line comparison of the four extant manuscripts of *Ancrene Wisse* has enabled us to make a

closer examination of the lexical change in this period. The examination based on our corpus has confirmed the accepted explanation of the replacement of the old, obsolete native words by other native words or by French loan words. Our corpus has also provided more proof that the specification of meaning conspicuously characterizes the lexical change in this period. The rivalry both between the old and new native words and between the native words and the French loans reflects the strong tendency towards the use of words with a more specific meaning. Moreover, it is often the case that the native supplanted words are either loaded with a wide range (perhaps too wide) of meaning or vied with homonymous words comprising a relatively wide range of meaning.

Our corpus is not a complete one yet, comprising only Preface and Parts I and II. A further investigation, based on the final version of our corpus, however, will give us a more detailed and reliable picture of the lexical change in this period.

NOTES

1. This paper is based on the presentation by the present author in the symposium on manuscripts studies held on December 6, 1997 at Seijo University.
2. Margaret Laing, Catalogue of Sources for a Linguistic Atlas of Early Medieval English (Cambridge: Brewer, 1993).
3. Derek Pearsall, ed., Studies in the Vernon Manuscript (Cambridge: Brewer, 1990), ix-xi, 1-74.
4. Tokyo Manuscript Reading Group, ed., Electronic Parallel Diplomatic Manuscript Texts of the *Ancrene Wisse*, Preface, Parts I and II: A printed trial version (Tokyo, 1997), 63.
5. Hugh White, Ancrene Wisse: Guide for Anchoresses, Penguin Classics (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 28.
6. Kiyoshi Awaka, ed., A Concordance to *Ancrene Wisse*: Based on J. R. R. Tolkien's Text, A Special Issue of Philologia (Association of English Studies, Mie University, 1991).
Medieval Devotional Prose, computer readable text from Oxford Text Archive.
7. The numbers in the square brackets are my corrections.
8. Bernard Diensberg, "The English Text of the *Ancrene Riwe* Edited from Bodleian MS. Eng. Poet. a. 1. (Vernon) by A. Zettersten and B. Diensberg to be published for the Early English Text Society by the Oxford University Press," Medieval English Studies Newsletter 37 (December 1997): 9.

9. "3" in the parallel text stands for "punctus elevatus" in the manuscript.
10. "7&" stands for "barred ampersand" in the manuscript.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Editions:

- Day, Mabel, ed. The English Text of the Ancrone Riwe edited from Cotton Nero A. xiv., EETS o. s. 225. London, 1952.
- Dobson, E. J., ed. The English Text of the Ancrone Riwe, edited from B. M. Cotton MS. Cleopatra C. vi. EETS o. s. 267. London, 1972.
- Tolkien, J. R. R. ed. The English Text of the Ancrone Riwe. Ancrone Wisse, edited from MS. Corpus Christi College Cambridge 402. EETS o. s. 249. London, 1962.
- Wada, Yoko, ed. and trans. Temptations from Ancrone Wisse. Vol. 1. Kansai University Institute of Oriental and Occidental Studies. Sources and Materials Series 18. Osaka: Kansai University Press, 1994.

References:

- Awaka, Kiyoshi ed. A Concordance to *Ancrone Wisse*: Based on J. R. R. Tolkien's Text. A Special Issue of *Philologia*. Association of English Studies, Mie University, 1991.
- Bately, Janet. "On Some Aspects of the Vocabulary of the West Midlands in the Early Middle Ages: The Language of the Katherine Group." Medieval English Studies Presented to George Kane. Ed. Edward Donald Kennedy, Ronald Waldron, and Joseph S. Wittig. Cambridge: Brewer, 1988. 55-77.
- Clark, Cecily. "Ancrone Wisse and Katherine Group: A Lexical Divergence." Neophilologus 50 (1966): 117-24.
- Dahood, Roger. "The Use of Coloured Initials and Other Division Markers in Early Versions of Ancrone Riwe", Medieval English Studies Presented to George Kane. Ed. Edward Donald Kennedy, Ronald Waldron, and Joseph S. Wittig. Cambridge: Brewer, 1988. 79-97.
- _____. "The Current State of Ancrone Wisse Group Studies," Medieval English Studies Newsletter No. 36 (June 1997): 6-14.
- _____. "Ancrone Wisse, the Katherine Group, and the Wohunge Group," in Middle English Prose. A Critical Guide to Major Authors and Genres. Ed. A. S. G. Edwards, New Brunswick, Rutgers UP, 1984.
- Diensberg, Bernhard. "Lexical Change in the 'Ancrone Riwe,' with Special Consideration of the Romance and Scandinavian Loanwords," in Symposium on Lexicography 5: Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium on Lexicography, May 3-5, 1990, at the University of Copenhagen. Ed. Karl Hyldgard-Jensen and Arne Zettersten, *Lexicographica Series Maior* 43. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992.
- _____. "The English Text of the Ancrone Riwe Edited from Bodleian MS. Eng. Poet. a. 1. (Vernon) by A. Zettersten and B. Diensberg to be published for the Early English Text Society by the Oxford University Press," Medieval English Studies

- Newsletter 37 (December 1997): 6–20.
- Dobson, E. J.. The Origins of *Ancrene Wisse*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1976.
- Laing, Margaret. Catalogue of Sources for a Linguistic Atlas of Early Medieval English. Cambridge: Brewer, 1993.
- Medieval Devotional Prose, computer readable text from Oxford Text Archive.
- Millett, Bella. Annotated Bibliographies of Old and Middle English Literature II. *Ancrene Wisse*, the Katherine Group, and the Wooing Group, Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1996.
- Pearsall, Derek, ed.. Studies in the Vernon Manuscript. Cambridge: Brewer, 1990.
- Tokyo Manuscript Reading Group, ed. Electronic Parallel Diplomatic Manuscript Texts of the *Ancrene Wisse*, Preface, Parts I and II: A printed trial version. Tokyo, 1997.
- White, Hugh. *Ancrene Wisse: Guide for anchoresses*, Penguin Classics. London: Penguin Books, 1993.
- Zettersten, Arne. Studies in the Dialect and Vocabulary of the *Ancrene Riwe*. Lund: Bleerup, 1965.
- . “French loan-words in the *Ancrene Riwe* and their frequency,” Melanges de philologie offerts a Alf Lombard a l’occasion de son soixante-cinquieme anniversaire, Etudes romanes de Lund XVIII (Lund, 1969): 227–50.
- . “Editing the *Ancrene Riwe* for the Early English Text Society: Past experience and future prospects”, Studies in Medieval English Language and Literature No. 12 (1997): 1–28.